

## ABSTRACT

In one embodiment, the online trading system having a real-time account opening process comprises one or more computers coupled to a network. The computers maintain a brokerage account database, and service web page requests received over the network. The web pages are preferably configured to implement a real-time account opening (RTAO) process that establishes new brokerage accounts in the account database. The RTAO process may include (a) obtaining contact information; (b) creating a new record in the brokerage account database for the contact information; (c) obtaining brokerage account application information; (d) updating the new record with the application information; (e) displaying a brokerage account contract; and (f) securing online agreement to said brokerage account contract. The process preferably also includes obtaining funding information to automatically initiate a transfer of funds to the brokerage account.